

**THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART
CLEVELAND 6. OHIO**

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FOR RELEASE

Miss Kirkwood, Sun Press(6.28.62)

One of the major paintings executed by Jacques Louis David, the French neoclassic artist, has been purchased by The Cleveland Museum of Art from the Leonard C. Hanna, Jr. Bequest and is now on exhibition in gallery eight.

Titled CUPID AND PSYCHE it was done in 1817 toward the end of David's career and reflects his dominant concern with the lofty glories and myths of Roman classical themes. — *and his newly developed interest in color, reflecting the artist's newly developed interest in color,*

The painting shows Cupid rising at dawn as Psyche lies sleeping on the blue velvet Empire couch which is canopied in gold silk and lined with rose velvet. A butterfly hovers over them symbolizing their love. Cupid's bow and blue quiver of arrows are close beside him. Above the couch is a window showing a misty mountainous landscape with early daybreak sky. Young James Gallatin, son of the American Ambassador to France, posed as Cupid and a young French actress posed as Psyche.

David's large allegorical and historical canvases represent three phases of his activity. The earliest works reflect neoclassic stories such as ANTIOCHUS ET STRATONICE or AMOURS DE PARIS ET D'HELENE. Topical paintings such as DEATH OF MARAT record the Revolution. LES SABINES records the Directoire Period and LE SACRE, which records events of the Empire Period, depicts the coronation scene with Pope Pius VII, Napoleon and Josephine.

David acquired his knowledge of painting from the artist, Vien, and from existing eighteenth century styles. He shared with Vien a distaste for the court art of the Bourbons. In 1775 he won the Prix de Rome and spent the following years in Rome close to classical antiquity - his inspiration.

He later returned to France to become a devoted follower of the Revolution and the chief exponent of the Napoleonic era. After Napoleon's downfall and the return of the Bourbons, David went into exile in Brussels. There he painted the CUPID AND PSYCHE remaining there until his death.

The painter's signature is shown on the arm of the couch: L. David, 1817, Bruxelles.

Mr. John Canaday
N.Y. Times

CUPID AND PSYCHE - BY JACQUES LOUIS DAVID

The Cleveland Museum of Art announces the acquisition of a major work by the French neoclassic painter, Jacques Louis David. The canvas is entitled Cupid and Psyche (L'Amour et Psyche) and was painted in 1817 toward the end of his career, when he was living in exile in Brussels. (It was originally called by David L'Amour, au lever du jour, quitte Psyche endormie)

The picture shows Cupid rising from an Empire couch, as he leaves the sleeping Psyche reclining on his left wing. The couch is painted in gold and blue and is covered with blue velvet. On the arm of the couch is the signature and date: L. David, 1817, Bruxelles. There is a deep gold and red canopy above, folds of the red cloth which fall about mingling with the draperies on the couch. Over the children hovers a butterfly symbolizing their love; and one is painted on the couch in gold, amidst stars. Cupid's bow is beside him and by the left corner of the furniture is a blue quiver full of arrows. Above the scene to the right is a window with mountainous landscape beyond and an early daybreak sky.

The picture is one of his last mythological subjects which occupied so much of his subject matter and which commenced when he was a young painter in the eighteenth century reflecting that preoccupation with classical themes, and more specifically Roman themes, with which he wished to emulate the lofty glories and myths of the antique.

The picture was originally commissioned of David by Count Sommariva. The young James Gallatin son of James Gallatin, Ambassador from the United States to France, 1813-1827, posed for the Cupid, as a young actress did for the Psyche. In the diary of the elder James is a note by his son which reads: "M. David asked my father whether I could pose for the figure of Cupid, to which my father consented and I posed the next day." Later he says: "I did not think my father would have approved the representation in the picture of David: L'Amour et Psyche." I did not see the model, but I should like to - she must have been very pretty. She was only seventeen years old but we never posed together."

The picture was exhibited at the Musée Royal of Brussels, in August 1817.

Jacques Louis David (1748-1825) was born in the middle of the eighteenth century. He early acquired his knowledge of painting from the existing eighteenth century styles and specifically as a pupil of Vien. He shared with Vien a distaste for the court art of the Bourbons, and after winning the Prix de Rome in 1775, spent the ensuing years in contact with Roman antiquity which was his inspiration and his generation who wished to revive

the severity and lofty grandeur of ancient Rome. He returned to France and became a devoted follower of the Revolution, and subsequently the chief exponent of the Napoleonic era.

The large and allegorical and historical canvases accomplished by David during his active life, were grouped according to the periods of his activity. The earliest reflect the purely neoclassic stories such as Antiochus et Stratonice (1774) or his Amours de Paris et d'Helene (1788). Topical stories like the Death of Marat (1793) record the Revolution as The Sabines (1799) did the Directorie and Le Sacre (1805-07) did the Empire, with the presence in the latter of Pope Pius VII at the Coronation of Napoleon and Josephine. With Napoleon's downfall and the return of the Bourbons in 1810, David went into exile in Brussels, where he spent his last years until his death in 1825.